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ANGELS AND MEN.

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So far as we know, there are but two races of intelligent, immortal, accountable creatures. In some things these races are alike:

1. Both angels and men are *creatures.* God made them all.

2. As they came from the hand of God all were holy, innocent, just, without sin or blemish.

3. Both races were placed under a law. They were tested. Their probation was fair and right, though not exactly alike.

4. Some angels and all men fell—fell into sin, broke covenant with God, and from being friends were turned into enemies.

5. The angels who stood the test were confirmed in holiness and happiness for ever; but all reasonable creatures who sinned, whatever their nature, fell under God's displeasure. The sinning angels were driven from heaven to enter it no more. Sinning man was driven from Paradise, never to enter it again.

6. In fallen men and in fallen angels sin is of the same nature. In all it is iniquity, unrighteousness, depravity, enmity against God: a lie, guile, fraud, robbery, vanity. Love, which is the fulfilling of the law, is wanting in fallen angels and in fallen men. To the latter

Jesus said, "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." No one pretends that fallen angels love either God or man. Satan is a liar and a murderer from the beginning.

7. All fallen angels and all unsaved men are condemned—equally, justly, terribly condemned. "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." 2 Pet. ii. 4. And death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned, all are by nature the children of wrath. The same holy, just and good law condemns sinning angels and sinful men.

Here the similarity between the two races ceases. God has made a great difference in the treatment of these sinful creatures:

1. "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Jude 6. This was their doom, doleful indeed, but righteous. No sentence was ever more just. No thought of mercy did God ever entertain towards them. No offer of mercy did he ever make to them. No Saviour did he ever provide for them. No substitute did he ever admit to bear their load of guilt. But in the case of man it was far otherwise. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii. 16.

How shall we account for this great difference of treatment? The cause cannot be found in any natural inferiority in the nature of angels, for men are naturally "lower than the angels." They excel men in their natural endowments. God did not pass by angels and come to men because he thought men greater than angels. Nor was the probation of men less fair than that of angels. Both angels and men had a perfectly fair trial. Nor was sin in man less odious or malignant than in fallen angels. Christ himself says that wicked men are of their father the devil, and his works will they do. John viii. 44. God could have saved angels at a cost no greater than was required to save men. It required infinite love, and grace, and wisdom, and faithfulness, and power, and condescension to save men; and infinite love, and grace, and wisdom, and faithfulness, and power, and condescension could have saved lost angels, had God so chosen. Nor do we know that the number of lost angels is less, nor that they would afford a less vast theatre for the exercise of God's mercy and other perfections than the human family. When Christ was on earth there was a legion of devils in one man. Mark v. 9. Of their whole number, as compared with men, we have no certain information. For the one race no Saviour was provided; for the other a Saviour was provided. The loadstone draws neither gold nor silver to itself. It passes them by and takes hold on iron, which is a base metal. So the redeeming love of God passed by the angels, took not hold of them, but took hold

of man and fastened on him. This is the great fact that makes the sum of the difference in God's treatment of the races. To one, mercy is offered. To the other, no mercy is offered. For one, there is a Saviour. For the other, there is none. To one, great and gracious offers are made. To the other, there is no offer of pity made. By faith in Jesus Christ sinners of Adam's race are pardoned and accepted, fully and gloriously justified. But lost angels are for ever condemned. Not one of them was ever pardoned.

2. In the case of man there is provided a system of means of grace. There is God's word which is a fire and a hammer to break in pieces the heart of stone. It is also a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. It is to all who receive it the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation. But no such word of God is addressed to fallen angels. Then there is prayer, another wonderful means of grace. In this world, every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened. Yea, whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Millions have thus called and were saved by God's grace. But lost angels never pray, have no command nor encouragement to pray. They never cry for help from God, for they know none will come. Nor are ambassadors of their own or of any other race ever sent to bear to them glad tidings of great joy. No gospel is ever preached among them. No one ever says, Turn and live, why

will ye die? Nor have they any other means of grace. But God gives all these means to men. Nothing is wanting among us to complete our system of means.

3. Nor are the influences of the Holy Spirit ever granted to lost angels. But into the hearts of men God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son, as a spirit of truth, a spirit of holiness, a spirit of grace and of supplications, and a spirit of wisdom, making them of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. Thus God calls men to a saving knowledge of himself. Thus he renews them, regenerates them, writes his law upon their hearts, makes them new creatures in Christ Jesus, restores to them the lost image of God consisting of knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, and thus saves them from the power of sin, and fits them for heaven.

4. Among lost angels are no conversions, no saving changes, no recoveries. Among men millions have passed from death unto life. These are great facts, results of the divine conduct to these races respectively.

5. Of course the future of fallen angels is all dark and doleful. No star of hope, however dim its rays, ever shines on one of that rebellious crew. They know their doom is sealed. They are "in chains of darkness." But to all, who hear and accept the glad news of salvation by Jesus Christ, the whole future is bright and growing brighter. The later the point of duration contemplated, the more glorious is the state of the soul saved.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun.

REMARKS.

1. Let Christians duly and often celebrate the redeeming, distinguishing, amazing love of God towards them. We can never exhaust a theme so rich. God's love has no parallel. It is beyond the love of a mother. It is costly, free, fruitful, everlasting. The best and most loving hearts have never been able to comprehend its length, and breadth, and height, and depth. All confess that it passeth knowledge. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." 1 John iii. 1.

2. If God is so gracious to us, it surely ought to lead us to holiness. The only right effect of the goodness of God is to lead us to repentance. And any heart that is not won by such love must be a bad heart. If we are not made holy by the gospel, the whole scheme of salvation is as to us as if there were no such scheme. For the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ, "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Tit. ii. 14.

3. And if God so loved us, we ought to love one another. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us:

and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." 1 John iii. 16. Surely we abuse his pity towards us, if it does not make us pitiful to the erring and the miserable. Dost thou hope that thou hast forgiveness of sins from the Judge of all? Then dost thou forgive others their trespasses against thee? If thou cherishest the memory of wrongs, bearest old grudges in thy bosom, and art slow to be reconciled to one who has wronged or offended thee, art thou loving like God? See Matt. v. 43–48.

4. As the Lord in pity led thee to accept his grace, and rejoice in his mercy, do thy utmost to bring others into that happy state. Persuade, and entreat, and beseech men to be reconciled to God. How pleasing it is to see Andrew leading Peter, and Philip leading Nathaniel to Christ! John i. 41, 45. It is a great reproach to one, who has received mercy himself, to keep silence and not tell others how they also may find mercy.

5. Art thou still in thy sins? Believe the gospel, accept the Lord Jesus, and be at peace with God. The offer of life is to you: "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." If you reject mercy a little longer, your chains, like those of lost angels, will be "everlasting."

Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore,
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, love and power:
He is able,
He is willing; doubt no more.

Ho! ye needy, come and welcome,
God's free bounty glorify;
True belief and true repentance,
Every grace that brings us nigh,
Without money,
Come to Jesus Christ and buy.

Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness he requireth
Is to feel your need of him;
This he gives you;
'Tis the Spirit's rising beam.

Come, ye weary, heavy laden,
Lost and ruined by the fall;
If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all.
Not the righteous,
Sinners Jesus came to call.

Agonizing in the garden,
Lo! your Maker prostrate lies;
On the bloody tree behold him;
Hear him cry, before he dies,
"It is finished!"
Sinner, will not this suffice?

Lo! the incarnate God ascended,
Pleads the merits of his blood;
Venture on him, venture wholly,
Let no other trust intrude;
None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good.

Saints and angels, joined in concert,
Sing the praises of the Lamb;
While the blissful seats of heaven
Sweetly echo with his name;
Hallelujah!
Sinners here may sing the same.

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